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9-19-2019

### Faculty Recital: Mike Truesdell, percussion

Mike Truesdell

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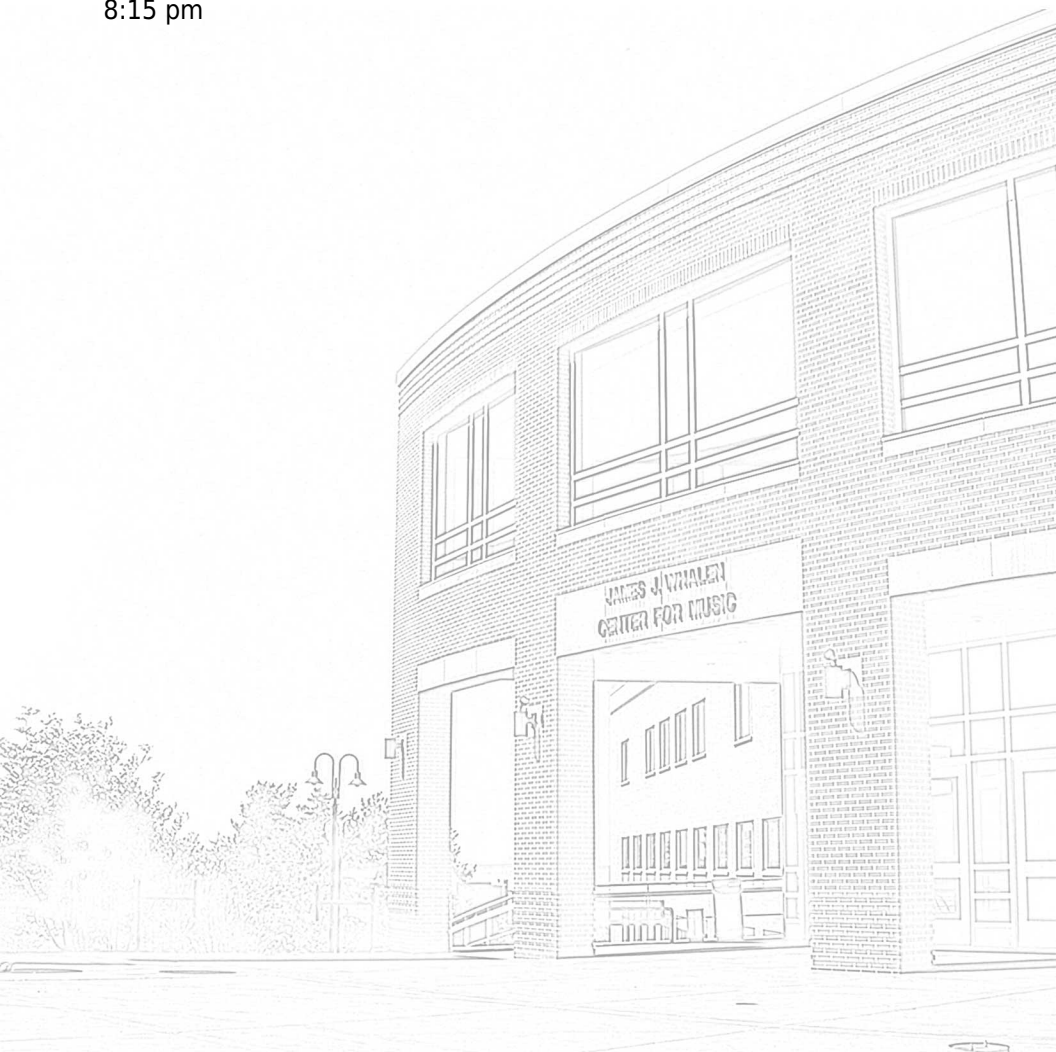
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**Faculty Recital:**  
Mike Truesdell, percussion

Hockett Family Recital Hall  
Thursday, September 19th, 2019  
8:15 pm



**ITHACA COLLEGE**

School of Music

# Program

- "Andianne, o caro bene"  
from *Il giardino d'amore* Alessandro Scarlatti  
(1660-1725)  
trans. and arr. Mike Truesdell
- Albinoni for the Young (2015) Jonathan Dawe  
(b. 1965)
- Realismos Magicos (2014) Rolf Wallin  
(b. 1957)
1. *Ojos de perro azul*  
(Eyes of a Blue Dog)
  2. *El verano feliz de señora Forbes*  
(Miss Forbes' Summer of Happiness)
  3. *El ahogado más hermoso del mundo*  
(The Handsomest Drowned Man in the World)
  4. *Buen viaje, señor presidente*  
(Bon Voyage Mr. President)
  5. *Un señor muy viejo con unas alas enormes*  
(A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings)
  6. *La luz es como el agua - 1*  
(Light is like water - 1)
  7. *Diálogo del espejo*  
(Dialogue with the Mirror)
  8. *La noche de los alcaravanes*  
(The Night of the Curlews)
  9. *El coronel no tiene quien le escriba*  
(No One Writes to the Colonel)
  10. *El cuento más corto del mundo*  
(The Shortest Story in the World)
  11. *La luz es como el agua - 2*  
(Light is like water - 2)
- The Connection (2001) James Rolfe  
(b. 1961)  
text Daniil Kharms
- Snowy Morning Blues (1943) James P. Johnson  
(1894-1955)  
trans. and arr. Mike Truesdell
- Vibra Elufa (2003) Karlheinz Stockhausen  
(1928-2007)
- "Andianne, o caro bene" (reprise) Alessandro Scarlatti  
from *Il giardino d'amore* (1660-1725)  
trans. and arr. Mike Truesdell
- Sonata in B Minor, K. 87 (1742) Domenico Scarlatti  
(1685-1757)

## Notes on Mike's Program

When was the last time you made a connection between two ideas, places or people? Chances are, whether conscious or subconscious, you have made several hundred connections today!

*"You know? Ithaca kinda reminds me of home because..."*

or

*"I didn't realize that you ALSO heard of Ithaca College!?"*

Humans are hard-wired for connections and our brains, like the internet, are structured as an interconnected web of information. While listening to music, these connections allow us to reinterpret and re-understand our experience of each piece in the context of the concert as a whole. Hopefully that will happen tonight!

Tonight's concert is structured around the work *The Connection* by James Rolfe. The story of Daniil Kharms's *The Connection* (the poet whose work was the foundation of Rolfe's *The Connection*) is bizarre for those of us used to a protagonist-centric story. There is no single character who is the protagonist, however, one could argue that the main character of the story is the process of the story - the journey through a series of events that connect seemingly disparate characters. This linear story suddenly it takes a turn when we realize that the story isn't linear at all, but circular. As we revisit characters mentioned at the beginning of the story, we realize that the connection exists both between the characters themselves and also between the beginning and ending of the poem as well. I aim to structure my recital in the same form, on both the micro and macro scale: each piece connects in one way with the piece before it and with a different way with the piece following it. This line of connections suddenly turns on itself by the end of the recital (you perhaps notice the reprise of the Alessandro Scarlatti aria), then (here I vary from Kharms), one more piece after the reprise to start a new ring of connections yet to be found.

## Notes on Mike's Pieces

### "Andianne, o caro bene"

Alessandro Scarlatti's beautiful aria "**Andianne, o caro bene**" is originally scored for solo soprano, continuo and descant violin and extracted from the opera *Il giardino d'amore*. In order to stay true to the conversation between these voices, I choice to feature them in three areas of the vibraphone and utilize contrasting mallet timbres.

*The connection:* Alessandro Scarlatti (1660-1725) and Tomaso Albinoni (1671-1751) were contemporaries in Italy during the latter-17th and early-18th centuries - Albinoni mostly in Venice and Scarlatti based in Rome and traveling throughout the country. Both composers were well known for both their operatic and instrumental oeuvre.

### Albinoni for the Young

Jonathan Dawe's musical language has continually intrigued me. Though the music expresses a contemporary chromatic musical language, baroque style and performance practice are clearly the foundation of **Albinoni for the Young**.

A note from Jonathan Dawe about this piece:

"**Albinoni for the Young**, a brief piece articulated in four joined sections (micro-movements), presents various textures that result from strands of music by the eighteenth-century Venetian composer Tomaso Albinoni that are repeatedly turned in on themselves. From the continual re-growing of musical material within its own structure, surface patterns appear, often new in sound—or at times suggestive of the original Baroque borrowings from which they originate. The title in part suggests the simple almost child-like fractal compositional procedure that leads to such richness, as 'youth' itself—despite its implied innocence—is rarely without complexity."

*The connection:* Both Dawe and Rolf Wallin explore a compositional process that uses fractals to determine musical material. Fractals are naturally occurring patterns that one can see in everything from clouds to trees to seashells: patterns that one observes on a large scale are represented and magnified on subsequently smaller scales.

## Realismos Magicos

Rolf Wallin is widely known by the percussion community for his composition *Stonewave* (which can be performed by a soloist, trio, or sextet), but tonight I would like to present one of his newest works for solo percussion, **Realismos Magicos**. This work was written for Colin Currie and features eleven movements of varying lengths (one as short as 5 seconds), each of which correspond to short stories written by Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Akin to Marquez's writings, Wallin's movements, no matter how short, immediately present unique atmospheres, most of which will resurface through and among other movements, even if only for a glimpse.

*The connection:* Wallin's inspiration for *Realismos Magicos* is found in the narrative and imaginative world of Gabriel Garcia Marquez's short stories. James Rolfe finds his inspiration in the surrealist Russian short-story writer Daniil Kharms. Though it is unlikely that there was any personal or artistic communication between these men, they were united by the idiom of the short story—both taking it in their own unique direction.

## The Connection

I remember first seeing **The Connection** performed many years ago at Zeltsman Marimba Festival by the incomparable Nancy Zeltsman (to whom the piece is dedicated). Kharms's text is spoken in rhythmic unison with a melody in the right hand as the left hand provides a changing rhythmic ostinato that constantly oscillates register. You will find the text below.

*The connection:* Throughout Ms. Zeltsman's performance at ZMF, I was, of course, spellbound by her narrative skills with both her voice and mallets, but was drawn to the physicality and rhythmic foundation of her left hand. The alternating low/high register immediately reminded me of the left hand in stride piano. I doubt this was the connection that Rolfe intended to imply with this work, but this connection stayed with me through the years and it pleases me to be able to juxtapose these two pieces for you tonight.

## Snowy Morning Blues

Once I decided on playing a stride piano transcription on this recital, I felt that no composer/pianist would be more fitting than James P. Johnson for his indelible mark on the field of jazz piano! **Snowy Morning Blues** has always been a favorite of mine and was an easy choice for this project (though difficult work to perform!).

*The connection:* One of the first techniques I learned in my jazz piano lessons was efficiency when expressing harmony. All that is needed to express a harmony is the third and seventh scale degrees. These scale degrees, more than any of the others, define the quality of the chord. In standard practice jazz and blues, this means that you will be playing a lot of diminished fifths (outlining the dominant-seventh chord). As I was transcribing, I discovered many diminished fifths in Johnson's voicings. At the same time I was reminded of Karlheinz Stockhausen's vibraphone solo that also prominently features the diminished fifth. However, as Johnson had used it as an articulation of harmony, Stockhausen features it as a prominent melodic construction.

### **Vibra-Elufa**

Karlheinz Stockhausen's **Vibra-Elufa** is a reduction of a segment of his massive opera *Freitag aus Licht*. The original features a duet between a flute and bassett horn. Through use of register and mallet choice, Stockhausen manipulates a variety of colors from the vibraphone as could be heard in the dynamic and interactive wind-duo texture.

*The connection:* A composer with knowledge of a wide spectrum of music, Stockhausen was very much aware of the aesthetic and intention of baroque music. The medium of *opera* serves as the penultimate connection here. This art form has survived the span of western music history and also has progressed just as far. As I placed *Vibra-Elufa* in this recital I began to think back to Alessandro Scarlatti's impression of opera in his time, and how far we came from the early 18th century to Stockhausen and other composers today. We seem to have nearly lost da Capo arias and harmonic convention, but the essence of opera still exists today: the dramatic narrative.

### **"Andianne o caro bene" (reprise)**

We have now come back full circle to "**Andianne o caro bene.**" Just as in Daniil Kharms' story, we have "connected" these works back to the original. Has it changed? Do we understand this work (and the intermi differently now that it is seen through the lens of these other works?

*The connection:* The connection between these two composers is perhaps the closest connection of them all - blood. Domenico Scarlatti is the son of Alessandro Scarlatti, and was brought up in the Italian tradition of instrumental sonata writing just like his father (and brother, Pietro Filippo).

## **Sonata in B Minor K. 87**

Domenico Scarlatti's **Sonata in B Minor K. 87** is a powerful one-movement sonata that features multiple layers of melody, countermelody, inner voices and bass. Horizontal, melodic voices are truly on display here, even though the harmonic movement is clearly no accident.

Thank you so much for attending the concert today!

- Mike

## **The Connection**

Music by James Rolfe

Text from a story by Daniil Kharms

Philosopher!

1. I am writing to you in reply to your letter, which you are intending to write to me in reply to my letter which I wrote to you.

2. A certain violinist bought himself a magnet and was taking it home. On the way some hooligans attacked the violinist and knocked his cap off. The wind caught his cap and carried it along the street.

3. The violinist put his magnet down and ran off after his cap. The cap landed in a puddle of nitric acid, where it dissolved.

4. And the hooligans had, by that time, grabbed the magnet and made off.

5. The violinist returned home without his cap and without his coat, because the cap had dissolved in the nitric acid and the violinist, distressed by the loss of his cap, had forgotten his coat on the tram.

6. The conductor of the tram in question took the coat to a second-hand shop and there he exchanged it for some sour cream, groats and tomatoes.

7. The conductor's father-in-law stuffed himself on the tomatoes and died. The conductor's father-in-law's body was placed in the morgue, but then things got mixed up and, instead of the conductor's father-in-law, they buried some old woman.

8. On the old woman's grave they placed a white post with the inscription: 'Anton Sergeevich Kondrat'ev'.



9. Eleven years later, this post fell down, eaten through by worms. And the cemetery watchman sawed the post into four pieces and burned it in his stove. And the cemetery watchman's wife cooked cauliflower soup over this fire.

10. But, when the soup was just ready, the clock fell off the wall right into the saucepan full of soup. They got the clock out of the soup, but there had been bedbugs in the clock and now they were in the soup. They gave the soup to Timofey the beggar.

11. Timofey the beggar ate the soup, bugs and all, and told Nikolay the beggar of the watchman's generosity.

12. The next day Nikolay the beggar went to the cemetery watchman and started asking him for alms. But the cemetery watchman didn't give Nikolay the beggar anything and chased him away.

13. Nikolay the beggar took this very badly and burned down the house of the cemetery watchman.

14. The fire went from the house to the church and the church burnt down.

15. A lengthy investigation took place, but the cause of the fire could not be determined.

16. On the spot where the church had stood they built a club and on the club's opening day a concert was arranged at which performed the violinist who, fourteen years before, had lost his coat.

17. And amid the audience there sat the son of one of those hooligans who, fourteen years before, had knocked the cap off this violinist.

18. After the concert they travelled home in the same tram. But, in the tram which was following theirs, the tram-driver was that very conductor who had once sold the violinist's coat at the second-hand shop.

19. And so there they are, traveling across the city in the late evening: in front are the violinist and the hooligan's son, and behind them the tram-driver and former conductor.

20. They travel on and are not aware of what the connection is between them and this they will never learn until their dying day.